

Reflection  
Public Safety Awards  
01/18/2023

*When someone asked me at 9 years old “what will you be when you grow up?” I often debated between a Dr. and a Police officer. Adults would laugh at the odd choices. As a child, I saw both resembling Superman-like heroes, saving lives.*

*More recently as I found myself in a debate in which confusion and chaos have been persistent, and in which I felt less than grateful, questioning, and indignant. I reached out to my cousin Jose who serves as a L.E officer in Panama. He pointed out the challenges of the job, helping me see a bigger picture of how instrumental and defying being in L.E. really is. With that in mind, I have put together this reflection:*

If I were to stand in your shoes, could I be brave, kind, and strong enough?

Would my character be deserving of acceptance, care, and respect, or would I succumb to the rush of adrenaline and sense of power that comes with the big responsibility of being the law? Could I do us proud?

Would my ego subdue my honor? Would I crumble under pressure, or at the sight of peers becoming part of the national statistics of men lost on duty?

Would I become the defender of the weak and frail or would I be tempted and enable sponsors of ill-doing while no one else is watching?

Would I allow the lack of appreciation, and lack of gratitude on the count of those I serve, to lower my morale and acumen? Or would I say they are just having a bad day? Could I do that every day?

Could I selflessly protect others in the name of good and without much recognition? -even when they undermine or condemn me, or would I become defensive?

Could I withstand the 12 or longer hour shifts only to care for someone whom I do not know, for a world that seems so lost?

Would I be willing to take a bullet, get injured, or die to honor my oath?

Could my compassion be endless and my drive out of the ordinary?

Would I jump into the fire or the flooded river, would I defy danger, or run for my life?

If I ever tire or my kindness and patience run dry, how would I cope?

Would I return to love? would I be bitter?

As I ponder on all these questions a strong feeling of remorse has overcome me...

Yes, I could do all these things, and YES!, I would protect others however, I have chosen the easier path.

While I sit at the comfort of my ergonomically designed desk attending phone calls to help people with their finances, you put your life on the line searching for the narcotics that kill so many in a year directly or indirectly.

You jump into that fire without a single inch of doubt, you take that hit in front of that mother and child from that D.V call, and as Lieutenant Bobby Travelstead, you give your life in duty to keep our communities safe and resilient.

You put your families second so that mine can be safe. You put your lunch on hold, your sleep, and the time with your friends, you even put your very own fears second, because mine come first, and if ever sadness or frustration overcomes you, when duty calls, you don't fail.

*So not only do I want to recognize and thank you for your bravery, hard work, and honor.*

I want to bless you, so you may be safeguarded in mind, body, and spirit.

So, all your trauma, clogged-up feelings, internal conflict, tribulations, and yes even fears and frustrations, from which we hear little, disappear.

I wish G-d grants you peace, protection, and abundance so that you may be rewarded not only with merits or financial gains but also with personal and spiritual growth and love.

May G-d ingrain your spirit with compassion, temperance, and restraint.

May your sixth sense never fail.

May you be able to discern the truth from the lie and the abuser from the victim.

How difficult must it be to walk in your shoes?

So, I pray G-d gives you, wisdom, integrity, empathy, and a strong moral code to do more than an outstanding job.

May you be willing and able to look deeper, to follow your gut and instincts for the sake of truth, justice, peace, and humankind.

There is much love, appreciation, and admiration for all of you in this community and we hope to let you hear about it more often.

*Remember, even though you are not invincible or made of steel; children, like I once did, look up to you. Your actions matter more than you may think. So hold on to your temperance, wisdom, compassion, and humanity.*

*Hold on to these values, for the good of children, for the communities you serve, but above all for yourself, because we are all human and we are all in this together after all.*

*Sincerely,*

*Odalis Medianero*

Public Safety Award Committee  
Rotary Club of Santa Rosa